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USDA LOOKS AT ENERGY PRODUCTION ON U.S FARMS AND RANCHES

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE – The most recent Census of Agriculture counted more than 20,000 farms and ranches that were producing their own energy. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will further explore how this energy is generated when it conducts the first national On-Farm Energy Production Survey in May.

“Given the growing national interest in energy efficiency, this survey is especially timely,” said Debra Kenerson, director of the Tennessee Field Office of USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). “The results will provide agricultural producers, policymakers and the public with factual data about the economic and environmental implications of on-farm energy production.”

The survey will focus on the use of wind turbines, solar panels and anaerobic digesters, as well as other methods of energy generation.

In early May, NASS will mail survey forms to farmers and ranchers nationwide who indicated on the 2007 Census of Agriculture that they were engaged in on-farm energy production. Recipients are required to respond by May 24 and NASS will publish the survey results in February 2011.

“This is a chance for farmers and ranchers to demonstrate the steps they are taking to reduce their carbon footprint and ensure the sustainability of our land, water and air resources,” Kenerson said. “As we did with the Census of Agriculture, we are reminding producers that this survey is their voice, their future and their responsibility.”

Respondents are guaranteed by law (Title 7, U.S. Code) that their individual information will be kept confidential. NASS uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes data only in tabulated totals.

For more information about the On-Farm Energy Production Survey, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (800) 626-0987.

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